

February 27, 2014

Regarding Governor's Bill #36 to remove the mandatory collaborative practice agreement for APRNs

Dear Public Health Committee Members,

I am writing in support of Governor's Bill #36 – An Act Concerning the Governor's Recommendations to Improve Access to Health Care. As a faculty member and graduate program director of the APRN programs at the University of Saint Joseph in West Hartford, I can testify to the fact that APRNs who are educated as either Family Nurse Practitioners (FNPs) or Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (PMHNPs) as it relates to primary care and psychiatric mental health services receive adequate education in safely prescribing pharmaceutical agents for the treatment of common conditions. The advanced pharmacology courses we teach on the subject build on their prior nursing education in their Bachelor of Science degrees where they take a yearlong course in basic pharmacology, as well as their years of experience as practicing nurses. In addition to a semester long course in Advanced Pharmacology, all of our PMHNP students take a semester long course in Neuropsychopharmacology.

The clinical courses they take after their core courses in pathophysiology, physical assessment and pharmacology also include content on pharmacology threaded throughout the curriculum in specialty courses in pediatrics, women's health, adult health as well as individual and group counseling.

APRNs must also pass rigorous national boards in order to be able to practice and in order to keep their certifications current with required continuing education in pharmacology.

I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to your discussion of this issue and recommend that the committee support the provision of independent practice status for APRNs who have been practicing in the State for many years now, and who will continue to provide quality care to its citizens, consulting when necessary with physicians and other health professionals.

Sincerely,

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